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PATENT

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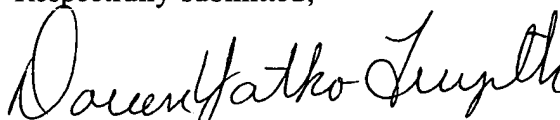
combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

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REMARKS

Applicant respectfully submits that the foregoing claims are allowable. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner thinks a telephonic discussion would be helpful, she is asked to contact the undersigned at 215-564-8352.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: January 5, 2001

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## INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

<b>(51) International Patent Classification <sup>6</sup> :</b> <b>C07K 14/705, G01N 33/00</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>(11) International Publication Number:</b> <b>WO 97/09349</b> <b>(43) International Publication Date:</b> 13 March 1997 (13.03.97)
<b>(21) International Application Number:</b> PCT/IB96/00943 <b>(22) International Filing Date:</b> 30 August 1996 (30.08.96) <b>(30) Priority Data:</b> 9517926.3 1 September 1995 (01.09.95) GB <b>(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):</b> BIOGINE S.P.A. [IT/IT]; Via Fiorentina, 1, I-53100 Siena (IT). <b>(72) Inventor; and</b> <b>(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only):</b> ABRIGNANI, Sergio [IT/IT]; Piazza Roma, 13, I-53035 Monteriggioni (IT). <b>(74) Agent:</b> HALLYBONE, Huw, George; Carpmals & Ransford, 43 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2RA (GB).		<b>(81) Designated States:</b> AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, HU, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, ARIPO patent (KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).  <b>Published</b> <i>With international search report. Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.</i>
<b>(54) Title:</b> BINDING PROTEIN  <b>(57) Abstract</b>  A functionally unglycosylated transmembrane protein having a molecular weight of about 24kd which is ubiquitous in human cells and exhibits the same species specificity as hepatitis C virus. The protein is capable of binding to HCV surface proteins and is a putative HCV cellular receptor. As such it has many applications in the fields of diagnosis and treatment of HCV infection and in the design of HCV therapeutics.		

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